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General Assembly
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Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Fifty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 19 April 2004 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Israel, the occupying Power, continues its reign of terror over the Palestinian people. In grave breach of international law and of its obligations as an occupying Power, Israel persists in its deliberate use of excessive, indiscriminate and disproportionate force against the Palestinian civilian population in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. This has included the vicious and unlawful practice of extrajudicial executions.

Less than four weeks after the extrajudicial execution of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin in Gaza City, the Israeli occupying forces carried out yet another extrajudicial execution on Saturday, 17 April 2004, killing a Palestinian man, Abdel Aziz Al-Rantisi, a political leader of Hamas, as well as two other Palestinians who had been with him. Following the same pattern of tactics and means as those used in countless other previous extrajudicial executions, the occupying forces fired missiles at the vehicle in which Dr. Al-Rantisi was riding, destroying it and killing him and those travelling with him and endangering the safety of others in the densely populated area in the Gaza Strip. In fact, Dr. Al-Rantisi was the target of another such attack in June 2003, when the Israeli occupying forces attempted to kill him by firing seven missiles from a helicopter gunship at his car on a crowded street in Gaza City. Although he survived that attack, 2 Palestinians, including a woman, were killed and at least 25 others were wounded.

This latest war crime was committed by the occupying Power in fulfilment of the virulent and repeated threats of Israeli Prime Minister Sharon and other Israeli government and military officials to continue targeting Palestinian leaders for assassination in blatant violation of international law, including international humanitarian law, and in total disregard of the pleas and demands by the international community for Israel to cease such an illegal policy. Indeed, Prime Minister Sharon and other high-ranking Israeli officials publicly boasted about the success of the operation following Dr. Al-Rantisi's killing and continued to direct threats against other Palestinian leaders.

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Undoubtedly, the recent failure of the Security Council to condemn the extrajudicial execution of Sheikh Yassin and to take the necessary measures to address the overall deterioration of the situation, owing to a veto cast by one of its permanent members on 23 March, has further emboldened the Israeli Government to continue carrying out such illegal actions with impunity. Unable to hold to its duties with respect to the maintenance of international peace and security when it comes to the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the Council has allowed Israel to continue acting as though it were above the law, permitting it to use the most oppressive measures to impose more death, destruction and misery on the Palestinian people under its occupation without consequence. In fact, since the Council's last debate on the matter less than one month ago, the Israeli occupying forces have killed a total of 37 Palestinian civilians, including women and children, some of whom were killed during non-violent protests against the expansionist Wall being built by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

In parallel to, and in conjunction with, the constant violations being carried out by the Israeli occupying forces against the Palestinian people, the Government of Israel also continues to attempt unilateral actions that are intended to further entrench the illegitimate measures taken by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. Such unilateral actions are being pursued in direct violation of the resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly as well as in violation of the agreements reached between the sides in the context of the Middle East peace process. The recent proposals by Prime Minister Sharon to impose a unilateral "disengagement" were taken one step further this past week with the exchange of letters between Mr. Sharon and United States President George Bush, the content of which violates international law and the rights of the Palestinian people, drastically departs from the road map (S/2003/529, annex) and renders the work of the Quartet almost impossible.

The Palestinian leadership calls upon the international community, including in particular the Security Council, to immediately become seized of the matter and to take urgent measures to address the grave deterioration of the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory as a result of the ongoing and blatant aggressions being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people. Serious action must be undertaken to compel Israel to cease forthwith its flagrant violations of international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, and to bring about a resumption of negotiations between the two sides towards a resolution of this tragic conflict.

The present letter is in follow-up to our previous 186 letters to you regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 7 April 2004 (A/ES-10/263-S/2004/279), constitute a basic record of the crimes committed by the Israeli occupying forces against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of the war crimes, State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

Accordingly, in follow-up to the above-mentioned letters, I regret to inform you that, since our last letter to you, at least 14 Palestinians, including children, have been killed by the Israeli occupying forces, raising the total number of martyrs

killed since September 2000 to 2,895 Palestinians. (The names of the martyrs that have been identified are contained in the annex to the present letter.)

I would be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of this letter and its annex distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Nasser **Al-Kidwa**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations

Annex to the identical letters dated 19 April 2004 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Names of martyrs killed by the Israeli occupying forces in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem* (Saturday, 10 April 2004, to Monday, 19 April 2004)

Saturday, 10 April 2004

Iman Mohammed Khalil Talabeh (12 years old)

Sunday, 11 April 2004

Mohammed Mahmoud Abdelrahman Deriyah

Monday, 12 April 2004

1. Eyad Mahmoud Mohammed Al-Tahrawi
2. Ahmed Khaled Hassan

Tuesday, 13 April 2004

Fuad Ahmed Abdelrahman Sultan

Thursday, 15 April 2004

Ali Mahmoud Barhoum

Friday, 16 April 2004

1. Mustafa Munib Sarsour
2. Hussein Mahmoud Hussein Awad Alayan (17 years old)

Saturday, 17 April 2004

1. Yasser Samer Ismail Abu Jamil
2. Ahmed Abdel Aziz Nimer Yazak
3. Abdel Aziz Ali Abdelhafith Al-Rantisi
4. Ahmed Abduallah Al-Ghara
5. Akram Mansei Nassar

Monday, 19 April 2004

Di'ya Abdelkarim Ibrahim Abu Eid

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* The total number of Palestinian martyrs killed by Israeli occupying forces since 28 September 2000 is 2,895.